

Message Text

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21

ACTION EUR-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1960

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C O N F I D E N T I A L THESSALONIKI 0313

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, GR

SUBJECT: REPORTED RETIREMENT OF BGEN DEMETRIOS TASSOPOULOS

REF: THESSALONIKI A-87, DEC 13, 1973

1. CONFIRMING RUMORS WE HAVE HEARD IN RECENT WEEKS, BGEN DEM. TASSOPOULOS, KEY FIGURE OF IOANNIDES REGIME IN NORTHERN GREECE, TOLD TRUSTED SOURCE YESTERDAY OF HIS INTENTION TO RETIRE FROM ACTIVE MILITARY DUTY IN NEAR FUTURE, FOLLOWING HIS ANTICIPATED PROMOTION TO MAJOR GENERAL IN NEXT FEW DAYS. TASSOPOULOS ADDED HE WOULD SEEK APPOINTMENT TO HEAD RE-INSTITUTED NORTHERN GREEK MINISTRY OR GOVERNORATE BUT, FAILING THIS, WOULD SIMPLY RETIRE TO CIVILIAN LIFE.

2. COMMENT: PROMINENT LOCAL FIGURES HAVE URGED RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF SUPERVISORY ADMINISTRATION FOR NORTHERN GREECE ALMOST SINCE ITS ABOLITION LAST NOVEMBER 25 (THESSALONIKI 159). ALTHOUGH TASSOPOULOS APPOINTMENT TO SUCH A POSITION WOULD PROBABLY BE OPEN TO CRITICISM ON SEVERAL COUNTS, IT WOULD ASSURE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF IOANNIDIS COHORT IN KEY CONTROL POST IN NORTH, WHILE ELIMINATING AWKWARD PRESENT SITUATION OF TASSOPOULOS CALLING SHOTS IN THIS AREA FROM SUBORDINATE ROLE AS 87TH MILITARY COMMANDER. ON OTHER HAND, IF MINISTERIAL APPOINTMENT DOES NOT MATERIALIZE RETIREMENT

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OF TASSOPOULOS, SELF-STYLED NUMBER TWO MAN IN REGIME, MIGHT

SIGNIFICANTLY ALTER LOCAL POWER STRUCTURE.

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